THE MINISTER OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI H.R. BHARDWAJ): (a) and (b) The Committee constituted under the Chairmanship of late Shri Indrajit Gupta on State Funding of Elections recommended the creation of a separate Election fund to which the Central Government may contribute at the rate of Rs. 10/-per elector *i.e.* about Rs. 600/- crores annually and all the State Governments also, taken together, may contribute proportionately Rs. 600/- crores annually to the Fund. Government has taken the views of the States/Union territories. Most of the States are prepared to accept the recommendation provided that the entire funding be borne by the Central Government.

(c) Does not arise.

Appointment of young judges

4186. SHRI V. HANUMANTHA RAO: Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any minimum age fixed for a person to become a judge of any High Court;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) what qualities does a person require to become a judge of a High Court;

(d) whether it is a fact that some State Governments have been recommending names of very young and untested people for appointments as judges in High Courts; and

(e) whether Government will develop guidelines and conventions to prevent nomination of very young people to High Courts?

THE MINISTER OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI H.R. BHARDWAJ): (a) to (e) The minimum age limit for appointment of a person as Judge of a High Court from the Bar is 45 years. However, the Chief Justices' Conference held in December, 1999 unanimously resolved that members of the Bar over 40 years and less than 45 years may be recommended for appointment as Judges of High Courts only if they possess outstanding merit, and rigidity that the members of the Bar must be above 45 years of age for being appointed must not be insisted upon. For the members from the Judicial service, they should not have crossed the age of 58-$^1/_2$ years on the date of availability of the vacancy for the service quota.

As per the Constitution of India, a person should have practised for at least 10 years before becoming a Judge of the High Court. Besides this, his academic attainments, standing and experience, specialisations, if any, competence in perception, ability to deal with complex legal problems, grasping capacity, Judicial Patential like maturity, temperament, capacity to persuade and to be persuaded, patience, fairness etc., Integrity and character and antecedents are kept in view while considering a person from the Bar.

After the Supreme Court Judgment of October 6, 1993 in the Supreme Court Advocates-on-Record and Anr. *Vs.* Union of India, read with their Advisory Opinion of October 28, 1998, the entire process of initiation of proposal for appointment of a Judge of the High Court lies with the Chief Justice of that High Court. While making recommendations, the Chief Justices keep the above criterion in view.

Funds for computerization of courts

4187. SHRI V. HANUMANTHA RAO: Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have approved a scheme with an outlay of Rs. 450 crores for computerization of 15,000 districts and subordinate courts in the country;

(b) to what extent will computerization help in reducing the backlog of cases;

(c) whether it is a fact that there is no link between such investments and benefits for poor litigants who have to wait for years outside courts;

(d) whether Government will develop an incentive based system of giving grants to courts and reduction of the backlog prevalent; and

(e) the steps proposed to help courts which decide cases efficiently?

THE MINISTER OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI H.R. BHARDWAJ): (a) to (e) Government has approved a scheme for computerization of 13,348 District and subordinate courts in the country, the first phase of which is to be completed by 2007-08 at a cost of Rs. 442 crore. It is expected that the implementation of the scheme will reduce delays in disposal of cases, cut down process time and costs, cut down pendency, facilitate access of the